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## **County Youth Share Experiences from Trip to Washington, DC**

LAKE COUNTY, IL – From March 2nd through March 4th, three Lake County youths served as panelists at the National Association of Workforce Investment Boards annual conference in Washington, D.C. The youths from Lake County were chosen as a result of their positive contributions to the Youth Council, an advisory committee of the Lake County Workforce Investment Board.

Israel Aviles, a senior at Zion-Benton Township High School, Emily Fischer, a junior at Libertyville High School, and Tavaréz Hughes, a Waukegan resident who



**Fischer, Hughes and Aviles**

completed a workforce preparation program, were invited to speak about how they participate as youth members in the Lake County Youth Council. The Youth Council is a unique group consisting of 42 members who oversee a variety of career services to young people in the Lake County.

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As panelists at the national conference, Aviles, Fischer, and Hughes shared their thoughts on how young people can be successfully integrated into youth councils throughout the nation. Fischer, a junior at Libertyville High School, feels the key is to give young people real responsibility.

According to Fischer, “Being given the opportunity to make an impact, and the fact that we are full voting members, encourages us to take our positions seriously.”

Fischer also added that she also learned how to lobby with Congressional Representatives and Senators.

“Seeing kids my age working as legislative assistants really piqued my interest to work in DC. I am considering a future in politics and public policy and just having the exposure to how things really work was eye opening,” said Fischer.

Aviles, a senior at Zion-Benton Township High School, added that the session also provided an opportunity to learn more about the Workforce Investment Act, the legislation that instituted the youth councils.

Hughes, who graduated from the youth program in 2001 with his GED and a computer software certificate, felt it was important to share with key lawmakers the need for continued support for such programs.

The three young students say they gained many benefits from the trip. They attended a dinner gala and were able to meet with several national politicians to discuss their viewpoints.

The Workforce Investment Board’s mission is to help businesses solve workforce problems and help individuals with career transitions. The youth council advises the board on youth strategic planning and policy issues and makes program-funding recommendations.